## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1.      (Currently Amended) In a computer network including a server computer system attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, wherein the server computer system is capable of authenticating the plurality of client computer systems using a plurality of authentication methodologies, a method of authenticating at least one of a subset of the plurality of client computer systems and users thereof, the method comprising:

an act of a server computer system receiving a request from a requesting controlling client computer system, the request including an instruction identifying at least one of the plurality of authentication methodology methodologies that is to be used for authenticating a the subset of client computer systems when the subset of client computer systems request service from the server computer system, the at least one of the plurality of authentication methodologies having been selected based on authentication abilities and access rights of the subset of client computer systems;

an act of the server computer system storing methodology information that identifies the at least one of the plurality of authentication methodologies and the subset of client computer systems to be authenticated with the at least one of the plurality of authentication methodologies so that an acceptable authentication methodology can be identified efficiently and without the subset of client computer systems unnecessarily revealing secret information;

an act of the server computer system receiving a subsequent request, the subsequent request comprising a request from the subset of client computer systems for service from the server computer system; and

an act of the server computer system, upon receiving the subsequent request, determining how to authenticate the subset of client computer systems based on the stored methodology information; and

an act of the server computer system authenticating the ~~requesting~~ subset of ~~the~~ client computer systems using the least one authentication methodology identified in the instruction.

2.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

3.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

4.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

5.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

6.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

7.      (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

8.      (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts recited in Claim 1.

Claims 9-17    (Canceled).

18. (Currently Amended) In a computer network including a server computer system attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, wherein the server computer system is capable of authenticating the plurality of client computer systems using a plurality of authentication methodologies, a method of controlling a type of authentication methodology used when the server computer system authenticates ~~at least~~ a subset of the plurality of client computer systems ~~and users thereof~~, the method comprising:

an act of a ~~requesting~~ controlling client computer system composing a request including an instruction identifying an authentication methodology that is to be used by a server computer system for authenticating a subset of client computer systems, the authentication methodology having been selected based on authentication abilities and access rights of the subset of client computer systems; and

~~a specific~~ an act of the ~~requesting~~ controlling client computer system transmitting the request to the server computer system, wherein the authentication methodology identified in the instruction is used by the server computer system to authenticate the subset of client computer systems when the server computer system receives one or more subsequent requests from the subset of client computer systems for service from the server computer system so that an acceptable authentication methodology can be identified efficiently and without the subset of client computer systems unnecessarily revealing secret information.

19. (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

20. (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

21.    (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

22.    (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

23.    (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

24.    (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

25.    (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts recited in Claim 18.

26.    (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure having a plurality of fields, the data structure comprising:

a plurality of client identifier fields that each identify a client computer system that is connected to a server computer system; and

for each <u>identified</u> client computer system, the data structure further comprising at least one authentication field that identifies an authentication method to be used by the server computer system for authenticating the client computer system upon receiving a request from the client computer system for service, <u>the authentication method having been selected based on authentication abilities and access rights of the subset of client computer systems so that the subset of client computer systems need not unnecessarily reveal secret information</u>.

27.    (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium in accordance with Claim 26, wherein each client identifier field identifies a different single client computer system.

28.    (Previously Presented) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 26, wherein the server computer system has access to the data structure prior to receiving the request from the client computer system.

29.    (Previously Presented) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 26, wherein the data structure is further configured to be altered upon being stored, so as to allow a client computer to use additional authentication methods.